

This, no doubt, was the image mentioned by Herodotus in his account of the festival.<sup>1</sup> On the nineteenth day of the month the people went down to the sea, the priests carrying a shrine which contained a golden casket Into this casket they poured fresh water, and thereupon the spectators raised •i shout that Osiris was found. After that they took some The fine vegetable mould, moistened it with water, mixed it with of Osiri: precious spices and incense, and moulded the paste into a small moon - shaped image, which was then robed and ornamented.<sup>2</sup> Thus it appears that the purpose of the ceremonies described by Plutarch was to represent dramatic-ally, first, the search for the dead body of Osiris, and, second, its joyful discovery, followed by the resurrection of the dead god who came to life again in the new image of vegetable mould and spices. Lactantius tells us how on these occasions the priests, with their shaven bodies, beat their breasts and lamented, imitating the sorrowful search of Isis for her lost son Osiris, and how afterwards their sorrow was turned to joy when the jackal-headed god Anubis, or rather a mummer in his stead, produced a small boy, the living representative of the god who was lost and was found.<sup>3</sup> Thus Lactantius regarded Osiris as the son instead of the husband of Isis, and he makes no mention of the image of vegetable mould. It is probable that the boy who figured in the sacred drama played the part, not of Osiris, but of his son Horus ;<sup>4</sup> but as the death and resurrection of the god were celebrated in many cities of Egypt, it is also possible that in some places the part

of the  
 god come to life was played by a living actor  
 instead of by

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 50. from, that of Lactantius. We  
 know  
 Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 39. The from Appian (*Bell*  
 of Isis a priest per- that in the rites  
 words which I have translated "vesret-  
 or able mould are ywv KOLDITLUOV. literally. sonated Anubis, wearing a dog's,  
 fruitful earth." The composition of perhaps rather a jackal's, mask on  
 the image was very important, as we p<sub>rosCT</sub>i<sub>pdon</sub> a certain Volusius,  
 shall see presently. who <sup>Qn</sup> <sup>condemne</sup> (Ust) escaped  
<sup>3</sup> Lactantius, *Divin. Institut.* i. 21 ; in the disguise of a  
 priest of Isis,  
*id*\*) *Epitome Inst. Divin.* 23 (18, ed. wearing a long linen  
 garment and the  
 Brandt and Laubmann). The descrip- mask of a dog over his  
 head.  
 tion of the ceremony which Minucius <sup>4</sup> The suggestion is due to  
 Prof. A.  
 Felix gives (*Octamts*, xxii. i) agrees Wiedemann (*Herodots*  
*zweites Buch* p.  
 closely with, and is probably copied 261).